

A Nazi Killer Who Works For 'Radio Free Europe'

By JAN HORNÁK

BANAKA BYSTRICA, Czechoslovakia. — In mid-November, a 14-member group of the former nazi unit "Edelweiss" stood before the Regional Court in Banaka Bystrica, Slovakia.

Members of the "Edelweiss" unit frequently disguised as partisans, had ambushed partisan groups, dragged off participants in the Slovak National Uprising as well as civilians into captivity, murdered them or handed them over to the nazi authorities, sent them to concentration camps.

The Slovak people had an opportunity to get acquainted with the barbarism of German militarism and the SS hangmen methods during the time of the nazi occupation. The fascists and members of the nazi SS division who launched attacks against the Slovak peace-loving population, burned down sixty communities, sent some 80,000 people to concentration camps and tortured to

partisans as well as in so-called retaliatory operations against the civilian population. He himself had tortured people.

The list of crimes which Niznansky committed as fascist agent of the brutal nazi unit and as commander of an "Edelweiss" group is ghastly. He attacked partisan groups and entire communities; he and his accomplices pretended to be partisans in order to be able to get among the patriots, only to betray and liquidate them. On the occasion of their attack on the communities of Klak and of Ostry Grm, for example, he issued the order that not a single living soul must get away. The inhabitants of these communities were driven out of their homes, half-naked and barefoot, crowded into one of the houses and there all of them were murdered. Petrol was then poured over these sixty-four victims and set on fire. The





AT THE TRIAL of the members of the fascist "Edelweiss" unit in Slovakia. Above, the judges of the regional court at Banská Bystrica. Below, the accused.

death right on the spot some 3,500 victims whose bodies were later found in mass graves.

The unit "Edelweiss," too, was among these fanatical enemies of the freedom of the Slovak people. "Edelweiss" was the cover-name of the intelligence group "Abwehrgruppe 218" established at the staff of the Nazi occupation forces in Slovakia. It was a special Nazi espionage unit with the task of terrorist and anti-partisan activities. The "Edelweiss" was commanded by German officers and recruited its members from among weaklings in prisoner camps, in various collaborators' organizations, the Slovak labor service etc. They were promised considerable privileges, high pay, share in the war booty, etc.

The commander of one of the "Edelweiss" units was captain Ladislav Niznansky, born in 1917, an officer by profession who had served in the Slovak army. In the days of the Slovak National Uprising he became commander of a partisan group. But soon he was captured by German troops and subsequently became chief officer of an "Edelweiss" group. He even had several German officers under his command. As is evident from the present trial and from statements made by the accused, Niznansky was very active in attacks against

accused members of the "Edelweiss" group. Landa, Rozko, Vyshavel, Kan and others stated that Niznansky not only had issued orders for shooting helpless unarmed people who were fleeing from their burning homes but he even had the houses ransacked and burned. Thus he is responsible for the brutal murdering of 146 inhabitants of the communities of Ostry Oran and Klak, as well as for burning down of the villages.

After the liberation of Czechoslovakia, Niznansky tried to escape but was apprehended in Southern Bohemia, near the American army positions. But he was acquitted by the court in 1943 for lack of evidence.

In 1948 another suit was filed against Niznansky; he was sentenced to five years imprisonment. The Czechoslovak courts were not yet fully acquainted with his criminal activities. He fled before the sentence was passed in 1943.

His present address is: Munich, Ohmstrasse 14/7. Thus, Niznansky lives in the German Federal Republic, side by side with other war criminals. Niznansky holds a responsible post with the American radio station (Free Europe), spreading from Munich the poison of hatred against the East-European countries.